

LIBYA WORKING GROUP
FILE 25X1Talking Points for the DDI
15 January 1986

POTENTIAL SCOPE OF LIBYAN MILITARY REACTIONS

Libyan forces have the capability to mount a formidable challenge to US ships and aircraft in and near the Gulf of Sidra if Qadhafi orders them into action.

- The Libyans will be forewarned of the US approach with the radio direction finding equipment, reconnaissance aircraft, and radar. They probably also will receive early warning from the Soviet IL-38 reconnaissance aircraft, which deployed to Libya last week and two Soviet warships which are conducting an early warning patrol on Libya's behalf.
- Tripoli has had two weeks of alert conditions in which to make its aircraft fully ready for operations. The Libyans probably can scramble up to 125 missile-armed fighters in a 24 hour period, including their best interceptor, the new MIG-23MLD (Flogger-G), as well as MIG-25s older MIG-23s (with about 20 flown by Syrians), and Mirages. This rate was nearly achieved in 1981, when the Libyans flew over 100 aircraft within 24 hours of our arrival near the Gulf. Most of the 150 or so Libyan fighter pilots are only marginally qualified for combat by US standards, but all are probably capable of firing their air-to-air missiles and perhaps 10 percent are quite skilled.
- As many as a dozen missile ships and three submarines may be active in the Gulf within twelve hours of the arrival of the US ships. The Libyan Navy has 31 missile ships and six submarines, but some will be kept out of the Gulf to defend Tripoli and Tobruk, and [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Training levels in the Libyan Navy are low, and probably only one quarter of their missile ships can fire; this rate, however, would still allow as many as twelve Otomat and Styx missiles to be fired if the order were issued.

We believe Libya's SA-5 complex will be capable of limited operations as soon as missiles arrive there from the nearby storage depot.

25X1
25X1
25X1

25X1

25X1
25X1

25X1

- The complex probably is capable of tracking and firing at one target at a time--and probably no more than three or four in an hour.

It is likely that the SA-5s will be fired at US planes only if Tripoli believes US attack is imminent.

- The arrival of US ships and aircraft at the Gulf of Sidra probably will not be enough to prompt an SA-5 firing order. SA-5 operators--whether Soviet or Libyan--would have difficulty distinguishing between US and Libyan aircraft, since the complex does not yet appear to be linked into the rest of Libya's air defense network.
- Flights of high speed aircraft toward the Gulf at night may evoke a firing, since the Libyans immediately would regard these flights as sinister and they have only a slight capability to react with their own interceptors at night.
- If US aircraft frequently return to the Gulf of Sidra, Qadhafi will be very tempted to try to end what he would view as an embarrassing challenge with an order to use the SA-5s.

25X1

25X1

DISTRIBUTION:

Copy 1 - DDI
Copy 2 - NIO/NESA
Copy 3 - NIO/CT
Copy 4 - D/NESA
Copy 5 - NESA/AI
Copy 6-8 NESA/AI/M

DDI/NESA/AI/M

15 Jan 86

25X1

25X1